



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 16, 2000

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EASTERN STATE HOSPITAL WINS NATIONAL AWARD

RICHMOND—Eastern State Hospital in Williamsburg has received special award recognition by the American Psychiatric Association for its innovative Psychosocial Rehabilitation Program, the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services announced today. The Significant Achievement Award was presented to Eastern State Hospital at the recent APA national conference in Philadelphia.

The award recognizes a program of rehabilitation that has changed the texture of life for inpatients at the state facility and dramatically improved their prospects for returning successfully to the community. The program is centered on what staff have named a "treatment mall," housed in two buildings separate from the wards, where inpatients can go to participate in a wide variety of rehabilitation activities designed to improve their ability to cope with aspects of mental illness. Activities include such things as managing medication, managing stress, personal care, personal nutrition and activities related to re-integration into the community, including work and volunteer opportunities.

The Psychosocial Rehabilitation Program was implemented in 1997 and since that date readmission rates, use of restraints and seclusion, and injuries to staff have all been markedly reduced while inpatients' quality of life has been substantially improved. The Eastern State program has served as a model for similar programs at other mental health facilities in Virginia.

Eastern State Hospital, the nation's first psychiatric hospital, founded in 1773, is a modern 500-bed facility situated on a 550-acre campus near Colonial Williamsburg, site of the original 18th Century hospital building. The hospital serves acute and long-term seriously and persistently mentally ill adults and geriatric patients from the eastern part of the state. Its service area covers 5,000 square miles, encompassing 16 counties with nine community service boards and a population of 1.6 million.

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